



Ohio Department of Agriculture and Ohio Department of Health



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To: Health Commissioners, Environmental Health Directors, Nursing Directors,
ODA Food Safety Specialists, and Other Interested Parties

Subject: Recall Announcement (ODA/ODH) 2007-44c

Date: July 16, 2007

Update on Tainted Veggie Booty Snack Food ***FDA Testing Confirms Presence of Salmonella Contamination***

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) today confirmed that a strain of *Salmonella* Wandsworth bacteria found in Veggie Booty snack food is responsible for the disease outbreak that occurred between March and June 2007.

Laboratory testing conducted by the Minnesota Agricultural Lab previously confirmed initial epidemiologic evidence that implicated Veggie Booty snack food as the source of the outbreak. The results of FDA's own testing added further confirmation.

Veggie Booty is marketed by Robert's American Gourmet, of Sea Cliff, N.Y.

FDA continues to advise consumers not to eat any Veggie Booty and to throw away product they have. FDA also advises consumers not to eat Super Veggie Tings Crunchy Corn Sticks, and to throw out any supplies they have, because this product also may be contaminated.

No illnesses have been associated with any other Robert's American Gourmet products.

Salmonella typically causes diarrhea (may be bloody), often accompanied by abdominal cramps and fever. Symptoms typically begin within one to four days after exposure to the bacteria. In infants and persons with poor underlying health and those with weakened immune systems, *Salmonella* can invade the bloodstream and cause life-threatening infections.

Individuals who have recently eaten Veggie Booty or Super Veggie Tings Crunchy Corn Sticks and who have experienced any of the symptoms described above should contact a doctor or other health care provider immediately. Both products may appeal to children, so parents should be especially vigilant and seek medical care if they observe signs of illness.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has identified 60 persons, mostly toddlers, from 19 states who have become ill. Five persons were hospitalized. No deaths have been reported. States reporting illnesses include: California (seven cases), Colorado (five), Connecticut (two), Georgia (one), Illinois (one), Indiana (one), Massachusetts (four), Minnesota (two), New Hampshire (two), New Jersey (two), New York (15), Oregon (one), Pennsylvania (four), Tennessee (one), Texas (two), Virginia (one), Vermont (three), Washington (four), and Wisconsin (two).

FDA, the States, and CDC are continuing the investigation. Preliminary testing suggests that the seasoning mix used in Veggie Booty may be the source of the contamination. FDA will

continue to trace back the ingredients and processing methods used for the seasoning mix, seeing to determine whether the seasoning actually is the source of the problem.

Veggie Booty is sold in a flexible plastic foil bag in four ounce, one ounce and one-half ounce packages. Some gift baskets available for purchase on the internet include Veggie Booty or Super Veggie Tings Crunchy Corn Sticks.

Robert's American Gourmet ceased distributing Veggie Booty and began recalling the product on June 28. The company has also voluntarily recalled all lots and sizes of Super Veggie Tings Crunchy Corn Sticks snack food because the same potentially contaminated seasoning may have been used in making that product, too. In addition, the manufacturer of Veggie Booty and other products for Robert's has ceased production until this investigation is complete. Robert's American Gourmet and its contract manufacturer are fully cooperating with FDA's investigation into the cause of the contamination.

FDA will provide additional updates as the investigation progresses and more information becomes available.